

want. Clearly, President Uribe has done a lot, a tremendous amount, and he has made real progress.

As we have seen this past week, there is a lot happening in Latin America. Colombia, of course, has been fighting the FARC and other terrorists and narcotrafficking groups over the last three and four decades and they've made tremendous progress under President Uribe. We know the FARC in particular are the biggest leftist, antigovernment narcotraffic and terrorist group. They fund themselves by the sales of narcotics. It was recently uncovered, we discovered the links between Hugo Chavez of Venezuela and the FARC, possibly \$300 million in subsidies, long suspected but now proven.

The bottom line is the Colombia agreement is good for democracy, it's good for America, it's good for workers, and it's good for manufacturing. I urge this Congress to bring it up for a vote and let's pass it.

LIVABLE COMMUNITIES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 4, 2007, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) is recognized during morning-hour debate for 5 minutes.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

In a couple of hours, the House of Representatives will be dealing on the suspension calendar with House Resolution 936, a commemoration of the 200th anniversary of the Gallatin plan. This historic effort was a plan commissioned by President Thomas Jefferson, led by his Secretary of the Treasury, Albert Gallatin, to design a system to knit together a ragtag group of 13 colonies into a transcontinental nation. It focused on transportation, on waterways, it planted the seeds for what would ultimately become the transcontinental railroad, and actually unleashed a pattern that carried through to the national park system, the hydro system and, indeed, the national interstate highway system signed into law by President Eisenhower.

Today's commemoration comes at a critical time, for just as Albert Gallatin did something important for the founding of our Nation, today America's infrastructure is falling apart. The American Society of Civil Engineers rates our infrastructure at a D-minus. It's one of the reasons our economy is in decline. We're losing the competition to Europe, to Asia. China is investing nine times as much of their national output as we are in infrastructure. And at a time of \$110 a barrel oil, will \$4 a gallon gasoline be far behind?

We live in a carbon-constrained, water-stressed environment with an imperative need to rebuild and renew America. It is time to celebrate this historic vision which helped build America for much of the first two centuries of our existence. It is critical that we remain true to that tradition,

but today infrastructure means more than just roads, bridges, waterways and canals. We're talking about railroads, aviation, power transmission lines, pipelines, indeed the green infrastructure, the network of environmental, park and open space that means so much to the protection of the environment and clean air.

It is time for us to craft a new plan, a vision for this century, one that takes into account global warming, rising energy prices, the change in demographics and the knowledge that we know today about how to put the pieces together. Renewing and rebuilding America ought to be something that people on both sides of the aisle can agree with, that we can unite behind a vast coalition that includes the Garden Club, the Sierra Club, organized labor and business, the professions, local government and environmental activists to make sure that we're putting the pieces together appropriately today, that we have the resources, the vision, the partnership that will make livable communities for all of our families, where they will all be safer, healthier and more economically secure.

I look forward to the debate today on the Gallatin plan and the commitment of an infrastructure vision for this century.

VENEZUELA: A STATE SPONSOR OF TERRORISM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 4, 2007, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MACK) is recognized during morning-hour debate for 2 minutes.

Mr. MACK. Madam Speaker, last week our allies in Colombia struck a blow for freedom against the terrorist organization known as the FARC. As we all know, the FARC supports its war against our friends in Colombia through drug trafficking, kidnappings, and the murder of innocent civilians. While Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez has been vocal in his support of the FARC and his opposition to the United States and Colombia, it is now clear that Chavez is increasingly intertwined with the FARC and is now giving aid and comfort to terrorist organizations.

During last week's raid in Ecuador, the Colombian authorities recovered records that clearly show that Chavez has been giving the FARC millions of dollars, weapons, and safe passage in Venezuela. Last night, published reports indicate that the Bush administration has taken the first steps towards naming Venezuela as a state sponsor of terrorism because of its support of terrorist organizations just like the FARC.

I am pleased that the Bush administration has initiated the process of including Venezuela on the list with the likes of Iran, Cuba and North Korea. Madam Speaker, the time has come to once and for all take the steps that will cripple the ability of the Chavez re-

gime to fund its terrorist friends and allies. By adding Venezuela to the list of official state sponsors of terrorism, we will help do just that. Furthermore, Congress must act now on the Colombian Free Trade Agreement to promote freedom and prosperity in the region. By passing the Colombian Free Trade Agreement, we will show our allies we stand with them and against the tyranny of Hugo Chavez.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

Washington, DC, March 6, 2008.

Hon. GEORGE W. BUSH,

President of the United States, The White House, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT: I am writing to seek your support in standing against Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez and his support for terrorist groups in our hemisphere by designating Venezuela a state sponsor of terrorism.

Last weekend, our allies in Colombia struck a blow for freedom against the internationally-recognized terrorist organization known as the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC). The FARC supports its war against our friends in Colombia through drug trafficking, kidnappings, and the murder of innocent civilians. And, as you are aware, the FARC has expanded their war in Colombia to specifically target the United States by their holding of three Americans as hostages. The attack last weekend which occurred in Ecuador, about a mile from the Colombia-Ecuador border, killed Raul Reyes who was a leader of the FARC terrorist organization.

While Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez has been quite vocal in his support of the FARC and his opposition to the United States and Colombia, it is now abundantly clear that Mr. Chavez is increasingly intertwined with the FARC and is now giving aid and comfort to international terrorist organizations. During last week's raid in Ecuador, the Colombian authorities recovered several laptop computers and records belonging to Mr. Reyes. Reports indicate that included in those laptops and papers is evidence that Mr. Chavez has given the FARC hundreds of millions of dollars, weapons, and safe passage and haven in Venezuela.

According to our State Department, "... state sponsors of terrorism provide critical support to non-state terrorist groups. Without state sponsors, terrorist groups would have much more difficulty obtaining the funds, weapons, materials, and secure areas they require to plan and conduct operations." While Venezuela previously has been certified by our Secretary of State as "not fully cooperating" with our counterterrorism efforts, it is increasingly evident that Venezuela now qualifies to be designated as a "state sponsor of terrorism."

Designating a country that repeatedly provides support for international terrorists, like the FARC, imposes certain United States government sanctions such as a ban on arms-related exports and sales and the imposition of economic and financial restrictions. Other countries which have been designated as state sponsors of terrorism and which are good friends of President Chavez include Cuba and Iran.

As you are aware, President Chavez has repeatedly threatened to cut off shipments of oil to the United States. As I have said to you before, we cannot be held as an economic hostage to the whims of tyrants, thugs, and dictators like President Chavez and his anti-American allies such as Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. Designating Venezuela and the Chavez regime as a state sponsor of terrorism would likely mean an end to Venezuelan oil until there is regime

change there. However, now is the time for us to stand against President Chavez and for the United States government to firmly protect our nation and our economy against an oil war with Venezuela and its allies. That is why I have called for having proactive policies in place, such as increasing our Strategic Petroleum Reserve. I believe that it is in our national security interest to begin increasing our Strategic Petroleum Reserve in order to replace Venezuela's supply to the United States. By doing this, we will let the markets know that the United States government will protect the American people from those who sponsor terrorism and would use oil as an economic and political weapon against our nation.

The FARC is despised across Latin America and many Venezuelans are openly denouncing President Chavez for his alliance and open support of a terrorist organization. In President Chavez's effort to take the focus off of his failed domestic policies and his recent loss in the December referendum, Mr. Chavez is increasingly trying to create an international crisis with neighboring Colombia and he is seeking to destabilize all of Latin America. We must recognize this gathering storm and must stop Mr. Chavez in his tracks by designating Venezuela as a state sponsor of terrorism. By taking this prudent step, we will be standing against President Chavez and his menacing alliances and we will be defending the people of the region against a dangerous thug and dictator in Latin America.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

CONNIE MACK,
Member of Congress.

RECOGNIZING CAL STATE FULLERTON ON ITS 50TH ANNIVERSARY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 4, 2007, the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) is recognized during morning-hour debate for 3 minutes.

Mr. ROYCE. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I would like to take this opportunity to recognize my alma mater, California State University, Fullerton as it celebrates its 50th anniversary. In 1957, California State University, Fullerton was founded by an act of the California legislature. The enrollment at that time consisted of 452 students when those first classes were offered in leased quarters at Sunny Hills High School prior to the college moving to the temporary buildings that became a permanent site in 1960 in Fullerton. Half a century after its founding, more than 185,000 graduates have successfully developed careers in hundreds of industries.

Each year, more than 36,000 students attend classes at Cal State Fullerton, choosing from 105 different degree programs including 55 undergraduate, 49 graduate and a doctorate in education at eight distinct colleges: Arts, Business and Economics, Communications, Education, Engineering and Computer Science, Health and Human Development, Humanities and Social Sciences, and Natural Sciences and Mathematics, all of which provide an outstanding education to the students.

Its studies have led students to careers in teaching, nursing, business, the arts, communications, health care, engineering, sports, the sciences and more. Cal State Fullerton graduates have gone on to successful careers and their impact is felt not only in the State of California and the Nation but throughout the world. Among these graduates are Academy Award-winning actors and screenwriters, television news reporters, Pulitzer Prize-winning journalists, successful novelists, doctors, lawyers, judges, teachers, professional athletes, entrepreneurs, scientists and business leaders and even a NASA astronaut who served on the crew of the Space Shuttle Endeavor that launched into space in August of 2007.

Cal State Fullerton's student body also reflects the diversity of the State of California. As one of the most diverse campuses in the State and in this Nation, the university welcomes students of different ethnic groups, cultures and religions. In fact, many of these students are the first in their families to earn a university diploma.

The university received full accreditation from the Western College Association in 1961 and Cal State Fullerton now holds 14 national accreditations and associations. In addition, "Titan Pride" has been the rallying cry for 12 national team championships in seven different sports.

Finally, Cal State Fullerton is known for its distinguished faculty, many of whom have garnered international and national reputations in their respective fields.

It is with great pride that I recognize Cal State Fullerton for 50 wonderful years.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 48 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess until noon.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Ms. SUTTON) at noon.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Daniel P. Coughlin, offered the following prayer:

Lord God of the universe and eternal Creator, this morning, long before dawn, the space shuttle *Endeavor* lifted from the surface of the Earth to find orbit in space. This exploratory journey into the beyond to the international space station is designed to be the longest shuttle mission in history.

Lord, guide and protect the seven astronauts as they work to expand build-

ing in space and prepare for future scientific discoveries. Help the United States to remain a leader in encouraging the development of technology, space medicine, architecture, and understanding that will better human life on Earth and life in this universe.

May this global mission, with its Japanese component of the Kibo laboratory and the Canadian robotic device called Dextre become splendid additions to the international space station and inspire young people to study science and to build global harmony.

In You, O Lord, we build trust, and with You, O Lord, we uncover the mysteries of the universe, now and forever. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House her approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentlewoman from New Mexico (Mrs. WILSON) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mrs. WILSON of New Mexico led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has agreed to a bill of the following title in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. Con. Res. 66. Concurrent resolution commemorating the 175th anniversary of the commencement of the special relationship between the United States and the Kingdom of Thailand.

CONGRESS IS TAKING ACTION TO STRENGTHEN ECONOMY AND CREATE JOBS

(Mr. WALZ of Minnesota asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WALZ of Minnesota. Madam Speaker, this Congress has finally understood and is realizing what the American people have known for so long, that after 6 years of mismanagement of our economy by the Bush administration that our economy has failed America's working class.

This Congress is working to change that, having already passed a bipartisan economic stimulus package that will help jump-start the economy and create up to half a million new American jobs. Later this spring, recovery rebate checks of hundreds of dollars will be in the hands of 130 million